

W. A. Steele

THE LAY-MAN'S MAGAZINE.

"THOU SHALT LOVE THE LORD THY GOD WITH ALL THY HEART, WITH ALL THY SOUL, AND WITH ALL THY MIND—AND THY NEIGHBOUR AS THYSELF."

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ALEXANDRIA, MARCH 1st, 1816.

We deem it our duty to submit to the friends of the Church in Virginia the following considerations.

THE convention of 1813 adopted a resolution, having for its object the creation of a fund, by which the vacant parishes might occasionally enjoy the benefits of public worship.—But an inherent difficulty has been found to attach to the plan proposed, from the small number of Clergymen in the state, and the consequent impossibility of obtaining their services, as missionaries. This cause which continues to operate, must defeat the benevolent scheme of the convention: and until some remedy can be applied, the church must continue to mourn her desolations, and many of her children to sigh, that the harps of Zion are unstrung, and no voice of praise is heard in her courts.

Our venerable Bishop has done all in his power to remedy the evil, and has diffused through various and remote parts, a portion of that zeal which animates his labours. But the duties of his parochial charge necessarily limit this sphere of his usefulness. It appears to us therefore necessary, as well in order to give full effect to his Episcopal ministrations, as to derive the benefits contemplated by the convention, that some mode be devised, by which he may be rendered independent of any parochial charge. By this means every part of the church may occasionally enjoy the benefits of the public ordinances, and of the Episcopal functions; and thus being enabled to pervade every part of the diocese, He will have it in his power to encourage the desponding, to rouse the thoughtless, to give

direction to the zeal and energy of the pious, and to impress upon the whole system a salutary impulse.

It is with this view, we take the liberty of submitting the propriety of constituting **A FUND FOR THE SUPPORT OF THE EPISCOPATE.** Contributions may be obtained for it either by annual or life subscriptions, or by advancing an amount which would yield an interest equal to the annual subscription.—Should the annual product thus raised be more than necessary for the support of the Bishop, the surplus may be invested in bank stock, and the interest and dividend thereof be reinvested, so as to form, by its accumulation, at no distant period, we trust, *a permanent fund*, when the further annual contributions might cease.

In aid of this fund it does not appear to us unreasonable to calculate upon the donations and bequests of pious individuals, who, wishing to favour this particular object, will find the means of giving their bounty its proper direction, in the fund now created under a specific appellation. As soon as a similar fund was announced in one of the Northern states, the committee of that diocese received an anonymous letter, covering three thousand dollars for their disposal.

We have thought it not improper to sketch these general outlines of a plan, that they may be considered, and the members of the next convention be prepared to make such improvements as their better judgments may suggest. In the mean time, we beg leave to recommend, that measures be taken in each parish towards obtaining contributions, and that the sums thus raised be forwarded to the

convention,* for the purposes above expressed.

The convention of 1815, received a communication from the President of William and Mary college upon the expediency of establishing a theological professorship in that institution.—Whether this important object will ever be accomplished, will depend entirely, under the blessings of God, upon the liberality and zeal of the friends of the church, in providing for it a suitable fund. For the present we submit the subject for consideration, and ask your aid and advice at our next convention, in organizing a plan, which may embrace a charity so extensive and useful.

When the number and wealth of Episcopalians in Virginia are considered, we cannot but believe that these several objects will be cherished and that our church, which is behind none in the purity of her doctrines, and the excellence of her forms, will be behind none in successful efforts towards carrying into effect, the several parts of her religious and literary institutions. And surely, in the long list of distinguished supporters, a peculiar honour will rest on those, who, placed in the highest rank and station, have associated their greatness, and consecrated some portion of their wealth to such objects; and who will perceive that, in rallying round the standard of religion, they are upholding that, which is not only the best security and guard of social order, but is also the promise and pledge of a felicity above the warmest conceptions of the human imagination.

To conclude in the words of the resolution before alluded to:—we beg leave “most earnestly to entreat the members of the church generally, to consider the necessity of adopting zealous measures for the restoration of religion among us: that they endeavor to manifest their gratitude to

* The convention will be holden in Richmond on the third Tuesday (21st) in May next.

Almighty God, and their sense of the awful importance of his blessed revelation: that they consider the unspeakable rewards they will receive from that gracious master to whom they belong; whose goodness demands the warmest returns of love, duty and obedience; and that they will contribute to the utmost in their power, to render this most acceptable service to his cause.”

We are respectfully your friends,
and obedient servants,

WM. H. WILMER,
JOHN DUNN,
OLIVER NORRIS,
BUSH. WASHINGTON,
W. CRANCH,
EDM. I. LEE,

*Standing Committee of the
Pro. E. Church of Va.*

Those persons who are desirous of promoting the above important object, are requested to signify their desire to

B. ALLEN.

REPORT

OF THE BOARD OF MANAGERS OF THE BIBLE SOCIETY OF BALTIMORE.

PRESENTED AT THE
Fifth annual meeting of the Society,
September 25, 1815.

Officers for the present Year.

PRESIDENT.

Right. Rev. JAMES KEMP, D. D.

VICE-PRESIDENTS.

Rev. ABNER NEAL,

Rev. JOHN M. DUNCAN.

CORRESPONDING SECRETARIES.

Rev. DANIEL KURTS,

Rev. W. E. WYATT.

MR. EVAN THOMAS,

Rec. Sec'y.

ALEXANDER FRIDGE, Esq.

Treasurer.

REPORT, &c.

In conformity with the usage, established by the third Article of the

Constitution, the Managers of the Bible Society of Baltimore, respectfully submit to their constituents the following Report.

In passing over the minute of their proceedings, during the last year, the attention of the Board is unavoidably arrested by a donation from the Female Bible Society—a Society, which receiving its first existence not eighteen months since, from the pious benevolence of the ladies of Baltimore, has not only purchased and distributed Bibles to a very considerable amount, but is already enabled to make a donation of \$500, to this institution, the specific object of which is to aid in the purchase of the Stereotype press.

To give the early history of *this* Society a more durable form, all the documents, relating to their proceedings to this period, have been collected, and together reprinted; and they are placed in the hands of members of the Board, for an extensive circulation.

It appears by communications just received, that the important measure of obtaining a Brevier Octavo Stereotype press, is well advanced.—Three hundred and twenty plates are received in Philadelphia, and the residue comprising about two thirds may be daily expected. Funds to the amount of £410 are now in London, to defray the inevitable great expense of this press. The Treasurer has received in donations, in addition to that of the ladies Society, \$35: In six original subscriptions, \$30: In collections from several Churches, \$260 21: In proceeds of sales of Bibles, \$301 70: In annual contributions \$252: all which together with \$140 40, the balance per last annual statement, have placed in his hands, \$1,519 31.

His distributions have been 6 English Quarto Bibles: 472 English Stereotype Bibles: 7 German Bibles: and 56 German New Testaments:

Of this number 100 English Bibles, and 25 German Testaments, were a donation from this Institution, to the Cincinnati Miami Bible Society:—He has paid for Bills of Exchange \$503 55: For Bibles \$944 16:—Freight, &c. of do. \$28 93: Contingent Expenses \$29 39: and he retains a balance of \$13 28.

Thus much has been effected during the last twelvemonths, in the corporate capacity of the Society, for the extension of the Redeemer's Kingdom. The Managers would be filled with painful emotions, when they remark, in how few words, the abstract of their proceedings may be comprised, were they not conscious, that to the disasters and actual privations, together with the anticipation of still greater evils, arising out of the war now Providentially terminated, were owing their exhausted treasury, and consequently limited efforts. And if there be any, from whom no grateful acknowledgment is due, for the suspension of God's most severe chastisement; if there be a heart unmoved by the restoration of public resources and private competency—from him we now claim no augmented aid in our labour of love, no more zealous co-operation in the cause of humanity, of Christ, and Salvation. But from those, to whom domestic security, rescued property, home, friends, the unviolated shrines of religion are dear—to whom the hope of the gospel is precious, from these we now cherish the confident expectation of an active and effectual aid. And this, our expectation, arises as well out of the distinguished liberality heretofore discovered by those whom we address, as by the unparalleled importance and necessity of the present occasion. It is not for the devotion of vast sums, to the ordinary schemes of Philanthropy or Patriotism; it is not to raise lasting memorials of departed greatness, that we are at present concerned. It

is not merely to mitigate the bitterness of present evils, which no prodigality of bounty can wholly remove. It is not chiefly to compensate for inevitable privations which the allotment of Providence has assigned to so large a portion of our fellow men. *These* objects are wont to excite your ready liberality. But it is to give the eternal sanctions of holiness, to overawe the seductions of profit, of passion and appetite. It is to open the unfailing resources of grace to human frailty. It is to fill and dazzle the eye with the contemplation of a future glory, by which the illusions of sense are deprived of their dangerous lustre. It is to give to God the homage of hearts created for his glory. It is to give to Christ the possession of souls, thus enlightened by his own light, which he purchased by his own blood. It is to be instrumental in giving to these souls, through the gospel, a life, void of offence towards God and man, and a blessedness, unutterable and imperishable in the bosom of Jesus Christ. With this object may we not appeal to you perseveringly?—May we not urge you strenuously?—May we not hope confidently?—With this view of the work, decide upon the extent of your efforts to disseminate the Bible.

In whatever light Christianity is regarded, its excellencies, and its importance even to the *present* welfare of society fill and occupy the mind: they seem to demand, that our exertions should be unwearied, until the knowledge of the Lord shall cover the earth, as the waters cover the sea, until the light and consolations of the Bible, be co-extensively diffused, with the sorrows, and the frailty of man.

Is it regarded as a substitution for other systems of worship and faith? In this view the inquirer is compelled to exclaim, "God forbid that I

should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ."

At a period in which the influence of the gospel, is visible in every country, with which we have intimate intercourse, the benefits, resulting from this influence, are not so obviously manifest, nor can they be justly appreciated. And while a reference to the religious systems of ancient heathen nations, to their social customs, and state of morals, to afford a just contrast with the institutions of Christianity, must be minute and prolix, the great distance at which we behold them, weakens the conviction which their deformity would produce; we almost regard them, as an inferior race of mortals, secretly indulging the persuasion, that in similar circumstances, we should be, both more enlightened, and more virtuous. But in the darkness and licentiousness which characterise the religion and morals of nations in the present day, yet unregenerated by the revelation of Christ, we have ample evidence of the worst debasement attributed to the ancient heathens; of the profound corruption to which man will sink, under the sole guidance of unassisted, natural religion. The well known records of the idol of Jugernaut, the Moloch that at this moment bears a bloody and obscene sway, over wide extended regions in Asia, form a more approximated contrast with the holy precepts, and pure virtues of our divine legislator. They teach us more forcibly what it is we owe to the blessed gospel of Jesus Christ. The weary and emaciated pilgrims, who, in numberless throngs, visit this temple of the powers of darkness; the severe austerities and toilsome penance which they impose on themselves; the odious deformity of the inanimate monster which they worship; the sensual emblems and representations which decorate his shrine; the polluted spirit of their

homage; the cruel and remorseless rites which they are taught will fill him with his highest joy; these are living features of the human character, when unenlightened, nor refined by the power of revelation.

Such is man at this day, without the Bible. Such is his religion—and without religion of some character man never existed—such is his religion, the offspring of unaided reason; sanctioned by his wisdom; protected by his superstitious terrors; practised by his unguided, unsanctified zeal.

Let us not turn a proud contemplation on that holy faith which dignifies our minds: on that holy worship which from the Christian Altar ascends as incense to the Most High.—It is not to our own reason we owe it, that we erect not sacred edifices, to sensuality itself: that a Moloch is not enshrined in our temples, instead of the sacred presence of the spirit of the ONE TRUE GOD. Every beam of that knowledge which truly exalts the soul; every principle which unites, refines, and gladdens Society; every emanation of that holy charity, which is pure, and gentle, and benevolent, centres in the effulgent sun of celestial light and heat, the GOSPEL OF JESUS CHRIST.

The influence of the knowledge of the Bible, is also discoverable in the contrast, between two grand political events, which were similar in their general design; and which have taken place, within the recollection of many of us. The people of France, vibrating from the extreme of a most pernicious superstition, had rushed into the utmost licentiousness of infidelity. At this moment—when the rein was broken from the passions; when every dictate of religious fear was spurned, when no principle of divine love—no unerring maxim of forbearance and benevolence, remained to meliorate political rancour—the revolution of their civil government took place. The heart recoils

from viewing the progress of those implacable and savage passions, which could discover nothing venerable or fair, in ancient institutions of religion and government; no sanctity in age; no claim to tenderness in infancy, nothing inviolable in the character of woman. Nor are we less shocked at witnessing the bloody comment, upon the extermination of religious principle from the public mind, in the subsequent history of that country to a late period.

On the other hand, the American People, in whose hearts the knowledge of the Bible had implanted, with the fear of God, the love of man; with the most scrupulous veneration for the appointments of religion, the soundest, and most liberal principles, of government—sustained the trying and perilous conflicts of a revolution, without any deterioration of moral character; and speedily obtained, by the blessing of God, the well earned meed of a free national existence, and an unsullied national character. Such is the influence of the Bible upon the safety and prosperity of communities. And so imperious is the obligation upon us, merely fulfilling the duties of good citizens, to co-operate in the continued promulgation of the Gospel.

These however, are secondary advantages, naturally and beneficially arising from the adoption of the Christian faith. But the influence of the Gospel is not only discoverable in a pure altar; temples without idols; and a ministry without licentiousness—not only in the wise institutions of Society; and in the benevolent character of those qualities which are most esteemed. The Gospel is a system of *universal* application. It opens a refuge from our natural and well grounded terrors: it imparts a mitigation to our most inevitable sorrows—strength in our frailty—welcome, and needful light and guidance in every condition of life. For in

guilt acknowledged by reason, under judgment pronounced by conscience, the souls of the whole race of men, were in a perishing condition, without remedy, and without hope. Every step which the most wise, or the most virtuous could make, from reason's first feeble dictate, to the grave, was liable to remove them to a still greater distance from the reach and the awards of mercy. Wisdom, teaching only the obligation of virtue, but furnishing no efficient means of obtaining it, and no equivalent, or atonement for its absence, forbid tranquility in crime, without imparting the confidence of virtue. For innate corruption, there was no help in man. For progressive vice, there was no hope in God. In Christ, as revealed in the Bible, Mercy and Truth are met together. God gave us Christ, and righteousness and peace kissed each other. In Christ we have a fullness of all blessings. In Christ the law was vindicated—sin taken away—and God appeased. In Christ righteousness was manifested—man justified—death and hell spoiled. In Christ, the soul is enabled to put on the garments of salvation; Hope springs from the earth moistened with the blood of the cross, and spreads over the whole face of nature an aspect of peace and joy. The grave, instead of appearing the vestibule of everlasting dungeons, or the dreary bed of annihilation, becomes the consecrated gate of Paradise; and life and immortality are clearly discovered, lying in ravishing prospect beyond it.

But pardon is not all the soul needs. It is a re-union with God, no less than an exemption from the penalties of guilt, it so ardently pants after. The soul lies in as helpless a condition under the weight of its own corruption, as, at first, under the curse of the violated law. And the sanctifying influences of God's Spirit, are as indispensable to carry on the work of sal-

vation, and to give final efficacy to the atonement of the redeemer, as was the stupendous immolation itself. The knowledge that Christ had opened for us a new and living way, to the favor and throne of the Father, could afford no consolation to *sinner*s, who were still denied access, on account of that unrenovated nature, that spiritual leprosy, which no human power can remove. If then there is joy on earth, it must be in the Holy Ghost. If there is a treasure precious to the soul, it must be that blessed Gospel, which not only reveals a Saviour to the perishing, but discloses the copious, inexhaustible source of sanctification, to the corrupt. The weary and heavy laden with infirmities and temptations, may here find rest. Here the timid may repose their despondency and sorrows; and they who desire ardently to be conformed to the image of God, are taught to rejoice in the rich mercy and grace through Jesus Christ.

And we may perhaps here remark with propriety, that while a true and lively faith in these doctrines, enlightens the understanding, and purifies the heart, it becomes also the governing principle of the life; it is the only foundation of civil obedience, of equity, of benevolence, which neither passion, nor the temptation of profit, or pleasure can destroy. For that faith, which beholds, through the Gospel, the tortures and agonies of the condemned spirits, and then, thro' the same medium, contemplates the satisfying portion of the happy souls of the righteous, and which duly weighs and compares these different destinies;—That faith is a principle of conduct which no motive, terminating in time, can demolish or even disturb.

The Gospel then, in enjoining evangelical faith, as the fundamental virtue of Christianity, not only recognises an essential branch of the system, but provides us with an effectual

al aid and support in every other grace.

But were we, in the most imperfect sketch of the influence of the truths of the Bible, to omit an acknowledgment of *its last triumph over nature*, we should indeed be culpable. For at that hour, when the heart, supported only by the deductions of reason, is filled with sadness and dismay—where the hope of the Gospel reigns—all is peaceful and happy. At that melancholy goal, whence the last lingering friends of mortality have retired, it is there the Gospel takes her triumphant stand. She unfolds her inestimable page, and displays the words of her divine author: "I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me though he were dead, yet shall he live; and whomsoever liveth, and believeth in me, shall never die." In the active scenes of their existence, the necessity of her consolations was less felt. There restless ambition, there needy industry, there passion and sorrow, pleasure and care, disappointment and desire, agitate the throng. Here their warfare is accomplished; in the confidence of this holy faith they lie down, each in his narrow cell, where at least the wicked cease from troubling; where the weary are at rest: where temptation fails; sin expires; fear is disarmed; hope survives. Blessed Gospel! We are lost and perishing, and thou dost discover to us a Saviour. We are enemies—and thou showest us that Jesus is our peace. We are sinful and infirm—and thou bestowest upon us a sanctifier. We are sorrowful—and thou art our solace:—sad and fearful—and thou teachest us to whom we should go. We die;—and thou assurest us of immortal life.—Death may destroy this frail cottage. But thou proclaimest it shall rise again, a glorious temple, in the everlasting Zion of Jehovah and the Lamb. Blessed Gospel!

Persuaded of the value of these conso-

lations, the Board are conscious of no higher duty or pleasure, than to be instrumental in imparting them to their fellow men. And they earnestly solicit, for this purpose, the co-operation of their fellow citizens. Believer, do you cherish with sacred enthusiasm that volume which dissolves your doubts, mitigates your religious fears, is your solace in sorrow, your guide in difficulties, your hope in death? Sinner, when conscience sets your transgressions and corruption in array against you, is the name of your Saviour precious to your soul? Timid and faltering Christian, do the assurance of the succours of God's spirit, and the gracious fruits of a fervent prayer, impart confidence, and invigorated resolution, to your feeble virtues? It is in your power by an association with us in this work, to extend these benefits to multitudes of our fellow-men now destitute of them. We trust that in a cause, where all denominations—Every community—and almost every nation, are together striving, for the glory of God, and the salvation of man, the *Citizens of Baltimore* will not subject their name to disgraceful comparisons, and foul reproach. In order that your aid may be, in some degree, proportioned to the importance of our object, subduct something from your daily innocent gratifications, something from your vanities and amusements, something from your pomp and splendor—bring and lay it at the altar, and say: This I do for Jesus' sake. And while you cherish, in an impassioned heart, the knowledge that "Christ Jesus came into the world, to save sinners," reflect: "If God so loved us, ought we not also to love one another?"

ARCHBISHOP USHER was a man of distinguished learning, piety and diligence. The following circumstance will shew that his humility

equalled his other valuable endowments.

A friend of the Archbishop repeatedly urged him to write his thoughts on SANCTIFICATION, which at length he engaged to do; but a considerable time elapsing, the performance of his promise was unfortunately claimed. The Bishop replied to this purpose: "I have not written, and yet I cannot charge myself with a breach of promise; for I began to write; but when I came to treat of the new creature, which God formeth by his own Spirit, in every regenerate soul, I found so little of it wrought in myself, that I could speak of it only as parrots, or by rote, but without the knowledge of what I might have expressed; and therefore I durst not presume to proceed any further upon it."

Upon this, his friend stood amazed to hear such an humble confession from so grave, holy and eminent a person. The Bishop then added—"I must tell you, we do not well understand what sanctification and the new creature are. It is no less than for a man to be brought to an entire resignation of his own will to the will of God; and to live in the offering up of his soul continually in the flames of love, as an whole burnt-offering to Christ; and O, how many who profess Christianity, are unacquainted, experimentally, with this work upon their souls!"

The Perfect Christian.

THE perfect Christian, according to the representation of holy writ, is he, who as far as the infirmity of his nature will allow, *aspires to universal holiness of life*; uniformly and habitually *endeavouring* to 'stand perfect and complete in all the will of God,' and to 'fulfil all righteousness,' in humble imitation of his Redeemer; who daily and fervently

prays for "increase of faith," like the apostles themselves; and strenuously labours to "add to his faith, virtue; and to virtue knowledge; and to knowledge, temperance; and to temperance, patience; and to patience, godliness; and to godliness, brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, charity." Such is the assemblage of virtues necessary to constitute the character of the perfect Christian; ever aiming at, though never attaining to, *absolute or sinless* perfection, in this present state of trial, probation, and preparation for a better; and meekly resting all his hopes of favour and acceptance with God, not on his own defective and imperfect righteousness, but on "the free grace of God, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus:" "for by grace we are saved through faith, and this not of ourselves, it is the gift of God; not of works, that no one should boast."

ORDINATION.—On Wednesday the 1st Nov. The Right Rev. Bishop Claggett held an ordination in the Parish Church of St James', in Ann-Arundel County, Maryland; and admitted the Rev. *Purnell Fletcher Smith*, and the Rev. *Thomas Horrell*, to the Holy Order of Priesthood. The ordination sermon was preached by the Bishop.

ADVERTISEMENT.

THOSE of our subscribers who will procure and forward to us the names of two *other* responsible subscribers, shall be allowed a discount of fifty cents, on their own subscription to the Magazine, for the first year

Those who have already paid their subscription, for the first year, will on doing as above, be credited fifty cents of what they have paid, on the subscription for the second year.